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WARNING REPORT: SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA* No. 17

1. The principal concerns expressed at this month's warning meeting involved Uganda, Ghana, and the Horn of Africa.

UGANDA

2. Analysts were concerned that with the growing chaotic and tense situation in Uganda the possibility that the West-leaning interim President Binaisa could be overthrown or voted out of office. Such a development would probably see a resumption of widespread ethnic violence and provide opportunities for the Cubans and Soviets. The Cubans have made good progress in expanding ties with Ugandan factions and if leftists came to power we would expect to see a significant Cuban presence develop. The Cubans have already made it clear that they would respond positively to a request for security and military advisers. [redacted] the Soviet ambassador has offered unspecified support to leftist opponents of Binaisa. It was pointed out that the Soviets need not get out in front in creating problems for Binaisa as the Ugandans themselves are doing a good job of it.

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3. Prospects of an early significant Tanzanian troop withdrawal have contributed to the rising tensions within Uganda. Such a withdrawal would immediately create a power vacuum which would likely be filled by a local group by force of arms. Nyerere's motives were questioned by some analysts who believed that he may intentionally be creating a power vacuum in order to be in a position to replace Binaisa with a stronger central figure, perhaps of Nyerere's own choosing.

GHANA

4. The situation was characterized as explosive, with a new coup d'etat by junior officers and NCOs a present danger. President Limann

**This memorandum is one of a series produced monthly by NIO/AF. Its purpose is to review possible developments in the short-term future that would be damaging to US interests. Obviously many of these developments will not occur in the time-frame or in the manner suggested, or will not occur at all.*

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was described as not being in control of either the government, the military, or the economy. This, coupled with the revival of widespread corruption and declining economic prospects could lead to a repeat of the Rawling-type coup. This time, however, it is possible that a new military government -- controlled by junior officers and NCOs -- would be more radical, offering greater possibilities for non-Western influence. The West would be seen as having failed to deliver support to the previous democratically elected government. Should such a coup take place, anarchy and confusion would prevail to a greater extent than it did following the 4 June military takeover by the AFRC. The soldiers were not popular with the public then and if they were to pursue radical policies they might have difficulty gaining popular support, especially if their takeover was perceived as a tribal bid for power.

THE HORN

5. Ethiopian air attacks were assessed as retaliation for stepped up Somali support for Ogadeni guerrillas who continued to harass Ethiopian bases and supply lines in the Ogaden. These air strikes will continue and probably intensify. They probably are not a prelude to an early attack against Somalia by Ethiopian ground forces. With virtually all of Ethiopia's combat effective troops having been drawn off for service in Eritrea, most of Ethiopia's approximately 80,000 troops in the Ogaden are recruits or poorly trained militia. They are also stretched thin coping with the 50,000-70,000 insurgents.

6. There is no explicit evidence that by these air raids the Ethiopians may be trying to warn the US against a closer military relationship with Somalia. The Ethiopians have made it clear, however, that they see the prospect of closer US-Somali ties as threatening and it would be surprising if Addis Ababa and Moscow did not intend these air strikes also as a message to Washington.

RHODESIA

7. Rhodesia-watchers were generally optimistic for prospects in the next three months, barring any unexpected developments such as the assassination of Mugabe or a breakdown of internal security. Mugabe in time will have to introduce significant changes to Rhodesian society or he will be faced with problems from his followers. Initially, he should be able to introduce reforms that satisfy his black constituents but which at the same time do not alienate the whites to any large degree. Analysts were cautiously optimistic that the integration of

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the armies would proceed smoothly. The principal security problem will involve the guerrillas outside the assembly points who have reverted to banditry.

8. It is to be expected that the Mugabe victory in Rhodesia will heighten nationalistic feelings among South African blacks, and that Soweto-like rioting could be triggered by an unpredictable event such as an increase in bus fares.

NAMIBIA

9. The view of analysts is that the South Africans would continue to maintain a go-slow stance on negotiations in Namibia.

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